

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

A. OVERVIEW

The agency supports training and education opportunities in order to maintain and improve employee skills and develop and assist effective State administration. An employee may request enrollment in any class or training which may aid him/her in developing personal or professional skills.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all agency employees.

AUTHORITIES

Texas Labor Code, Section 21.010

Texas Government Code, Chapter 656, Subchapter C

Texas Government Code, Section 2015.122

Texas Government Code, Section 2054.134

Texas Government Code, Section 2262

Texas Administrative Code, Title 1, §111.24

B. GENERAL CONDITIONS

An employee will work with his/her supervisor to determine what training and education is necessary in order to meet agency goals. Supervisors shall:

- create a strong, efficient workforce by ensuring all employees receive appropriate work-related training, education, licensing, and certification to meet the job demands;
- allow their employees to use their new knowledge or skills as soon as possible;
- decide what training, education, licensing, or certification best suits their employees' needs and benefits the agency;
- complete required paperwork and give approval for their employees to enroll in any type of training activity prior to registration and participation; and
- adhere to agency equal employment opportunity (EEO) policies prohibiting discrimination against employees on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, veteran status, genetic information, or disability status with regard to training opportunities.

For more information, see Chapter 1 Equal Employment Opportunity, Equal Employment Opportunity.

To request training, an employee must complete a Training Approval Form and attach the related training brochure or course description.

Depending on the cost of the training and whether college credit is earned, prior approval by the Executive Director is necessary before registering for or attending the requested training. The agency does not provide for tuition reimbursement.

Failure to complete any mandatory training in a timely manner may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

C. REQUIRED AGENCY TRAINING

All agency employees are required to complete certain training courses. Other training may be required based on an employee's position and function within the agency. Supervisors are responsible for notifying the employee of any additional training requirements.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION

New employees should attend a session of New Employee Orientation within the first 30 days of employment with the agency.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) STANDARDS TRAINING

All new employees shall complete the online EEO and sexual harassment prevention training within the first 30 days of employment with the agency. A statement verifying completion of the online training shall be kept in the employee's personnel file. Supplemental EEO training is required every two (2) years. A statement verifying completion of this biennial training shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.

ETHICS TRAINING

All new employees shall complete the online ethics training within the first 30 days of employment with the agency. A statement verifying completion of the online training shall be kept in the employee's personnel file. Supplemental ethics training is required every two (2) years. A statement verifying completion of this biennial training shall be kept in the employee's personnel file.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

All new employees must complete information security training within the first 30 days of employment. Annual refresher training is required for all employees. The agency's Information Technology (IT) Section coordinates this training and maintains the record of compliance. Employees that handle sensitive information, including financial, medical, or personnel data, are required to take cybersecurity awareness training that coincides with the distribution of data use agreements. State agencies must coordinate its agency IT training with training offered by the Department of Information Resources (DIR) each calendar quarter. DIR training must be used if it meets agency requirements and is competitively priced.

CONTRACT MANAGERS

Any agency employee who falls within the statutory definition of “contract manager” contained in Section 2262.001 of the Texas Government Code is required to complete a training program conducted by the Office of the Comptroller of Public Accounts (CPA) and must gain certification as a Certified Texas Contract Manager (CTCM).

PURCHASERS

All State agency purchasing personnel, including agencies exempted from the purchasing authority of the CPA, are required to receive training and continuing education to the extent required by rule of the CPA and must gain certification as either a Certified Texas Purchaser (CTP) or a Certified Texas Procurement Manager (CTPM).

D. ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible for agency-supported training and education, an employee must demonstrate in writing, to the satisfaction of the Executive Director or designee, that the training or education is related to the duties or prospective duties of the employee. Student interns and temporary employees working for the agency through a temporary agency are ineligible for training other than required agency training.

Supervisors and employees shall work together to identify appropriate training opportunities that provide best value to the State. Employees must receive prior approval to register for and attend training. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to verify that the training relates to the employee’s current or prospective duties at the agency. The appropriate Deputy Executive Director and the Fiscal Division shall verify the availability of funds. For these purposes, the General Counsel serves as the Deputy Executive Director for the Legal Services Division and the Chief Financial Officer serves as the Deputy Executive Director for the Internal Audit Division. Budgetary considerations may restrict participation in any training course, or licensing or certification program.

Employees must complete the Training Approval Form before registering for or attending any training. The completed form must receive certification and approval from the employee’s supervisor, Deputy Executive Director, and depending on the cost and whether college credit is awarded, the Executive Director before receiving verification from the Director of Human Resources. The completed Training Approval Form shall be kept in the employee’s personnel file.

E. TRAINING PLAN

Training plans should be developed for employees to address gaps in areas of critical knowledge and technical skill and to facilitate career ladder development. The Human Resources Division shall conduct periodic training needs assessments in order to assist managers and supervisors in the design of appropriate training plans and programs. Individualized training and development plans should be included as part of the performance planning process and documented on the

Employee Evaluation Form.

For more information, see Chapter 9. Evaluations, Employee Evaluations.

F. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Employees receiving agency-funded training are obligated to fulfill the following terms and conditions:

- All materials received by an employee as part of agency-funded training and education are to remain the property of the agency
- Approval for training or a license or certification program may be withdrawn if participation negatively affects the employee's job performance
- Employees may attend approved trainings without use of accrued leave. For degreed coursework or a licensing or certification program, employees may be required to use accrued leave for absences from work. Employees will not accrue compensatory time related to trainings that last longer than the employee's normal work schedule.
- Employees must inform supervisors and the Human Resources Division of any change in training or coursework enrollment.
- Approval to participate in training does not necessarily constitute an approved change in work schedule. Supervisors and employees are expected to coordinate work schedules and reach an agreement prior to training registration.
- Travel related to training should be considered during the approval process.
- Participants may use agency computers to take approved online coursework only.
- An employee who completes training and education to obtain a degree or certification for which the agency has provided all or part of the required fees and has not performed his duties for three (3) or more months due to the training must agree in writing in advance to fully repay the agency any amounts paid for educational assistance and any salary paid and not accounted for with annual or compensatory leave if the employee fails to maintain employment with the agency for at least one (1) month following training for each month of the training period.
- Agree to repay in a lump sum or other arrangement agreed to by the Executive Director the amount of money expended by the agency if the individual for any reason, except under circumstances of personal hardship, fails to complete the training. Personal hardship may include a serious illness, family emergency, or extenuating circumstances that are beyond the employee's control and that reasonably preclude the employee from complying with these terms and conditions.

Every effort shall be made by the agency to collect the debt through a reasonable payment procedure. If necessary, the Human Resources Division shall coordinate with the agency's General Counsel and Fiscal Division to notify the Office of the Attorney General and Comptroller of Public Accounts to begin legal action. In addition, failure to reimburse the agency may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The approval of participation in a training or education program is not a guarantee or indication that approval will be granted for subsequent training and education. Approval to participate in a

training and education program, including an agency-sponsored training, seminar, or conference, shall not in any way affect an employee's at-will status. Approval to participate in a training or education program shall in no way constitute a guarantee or indication of continued employment, nor shall it constitute a guarantee or indication of future employment in a current or prospective position with the agency.

In the event an employee is scheduled to attend a course and knows in advance of an inability to attend, the employee shall notify his supervisor and the Human Resources Division so that arrangements may be made to reschedule the training or send another agency employee. If an employee attends the approved training or licensing or certification program but fails to fulfill all requirements necessary obtain the license or certification, the agency may take those factors into account when considering a future request for the same or similar training or coursework. The agency is not under any obligation to pay the employee the costs associated with retesting in the event of failure to pass a required examination.

G. PROOF OF ATTENDANCE

Upon the completion of any training, the employee should furnish the Human Resources Division with a copy of the training certificate or other proof of attendance, if available, for the employee's personnel file. The Human Resources Division shall monitor all required employee training for compliance with agency policy and state and federal laws and regulations.